# Immunization E-Letter

**Indiana State Department of Health**

## Immunization Program

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## Preparing for a VFC/AFIX Site Visit

For those healthcare providers who are enrolled in the VFC Program, Immunization Program staff conduct site visits at your facility to ensure that all publicly funded vaccine is being handled and administered safely and effectively. There are two parts to a site visit: The AFIX portion and the Site Visit Questionnaire.

Your AFIX representative will assess patient immunization records in order to determine immunization coverage rates for your practice. For visits occurring in 2009, two separate immunization rates will be calculated: patients born in 2006 and patients born from 1990-1995. Both VFC and non-VFC eligible patients are included in the assessment. Your AFIX representative will give you instructions on obtaining the immunization records necessary for the assessment.

Feedback on your practice's immunization rates will be provided. Missed opportunities for vaccination, vaccine timing errors, and other opportunities for improvement may be identified. Your AFIX representative will also be able to suggest specific tools to increase your practice's immunization rates.

The site visit is also used to assess your storage and handling of publicly funded vaccine. The AFIX representative will need access to your vaccine storage fridge/freezer. A Site Visit Questionnaire is also used to assess your practice's policies and vaccine administration practices. Your AFIX representative will identify opportunities for improvement and tools to correct any problems.

The site visit is an excellent chance to ask questions, get the latest immunization information from the state and CDC and to familiarize your facility with the immunization resources available to you. Your AFIX representative is happy to answer your questions and address your specific needs.

## Hib Availability *(As of March 13, 2009)*

| Vaccine Presentation | March Doses Allocated | Doses Available to Order |
|---|---|---|
| ActHIB® | 6,580 | 450 |
| PedvaxHIB® | 200 | 0 |
| Pentacel® | 8,840 | 4,100 |

Pentacel® is the only Hib containing presentation that may be available in quantities greater than those allocated.

# FAQs About the Alternative Immunization Schedules

As the media continues to fuel the controversy over vaccine safety, many providers may be hearing of various alternative schedules, most notably Dr. Bob's Alternative Vaccine Schedule. To assist you in answering questions parents may have in regards to the alternative schedule, we have provided answers to some frequently asked questions.

*Note: The Indiana State Department of Health Immunization Program requires that all Vaccines for Children providers follow only the current CDC/ACIP Recommended Immunization Schedule.*

**Parents are asking about Dr. Bob's Alternative Vaccine Schedule. Who is Dr. Bob?** Dr. Robert Sears is a pediatrician and the author of a book titled *The Vaccine Book: Making the right decision for your child.* This book, written in October 2007, discusses vaccines and how parents can adjust the current CDC recommended immunization schedule according to their own preferences. To assist parents with this, Dr. Sears created "Dr. Bob's Alternative Vaccine Schedule" and his "Selective Schedule."

**What is Dr. Bob's Alternative Vaccine Schedule?** This schedule is for parents who are concerned that their child is getting too many vaccines at once or in a short period of time. Dr. Bob's Alternative Schedule suggests breaking up the schedule into multiple visits. It recommends vaccinations at 2,3,4,5,6,7,9,12,15,18, and 21 months of age. But the child isn't done yet. To finish the recommended vaccinations, more visits will be needed at age 2, 2 ½, 3, 3½, 4,5,6 and 12 years.

In addition to other differences from CDC recommendations, Dr. Sears' alternative schedule delays polio vaccination until 9 months of age and HepB vaccine until 2 ½ years of age. He recommends single antigens for M-M- R, with mumps vaccine given at age 12 months, rubella vaccine at age 2 years, and measles vaccination at age 3 years. He advises parents that if the "mercury-free" influenza vaccine or nasal flu vaccine isn't available, the child should skip the influenza vaccine that year.

**What is the Selective Schedule from Dr. Sears' book?** The selective schedule is for parents who do not want their children to receive every vaccine or certain specific vaccines, such as HepB or MMR, or for parents who want to delay vaccination. This schedule supports avoiding MMR or varicella vaccination and suggests the children can have titers drawn at age 10 to check for natural immunity. Hepatitis B vaccine is not recommended to be given until age 12 years.

**Why did Dr. Bob create these schedules that differ from the recommended schedule from CDC, the AAP, and AAFP?** According to Dr. Sears, he developed his alternative vaccination schedules because parents want options. If we offer parents a gradual schedule, Dr. Sears says, they will be more accepting of vaccinating. There are concerns, however, that Dr. Sears' book does not offer complete information or even misrepresents vaccine science to parents. Dr. Paul Offit and Charlotte Moser recently addressed the concerns with Dr. Sears' alternative schedules in *Pediatrics.* The article is available at: http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/123/1/e164 (free access download)

**What is the problem with following Dr. Sears' schedules?** Dr. Sears' schedules delay vaccination and in some cases support skipping immunizations altogether, leaving more children vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases for longer periods of time. This could lead to increased disease outbreaks, decreased herd immunity, and even deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases. The alternative schedule, with its 12 immunization visits by age 2 years, will likely lead to decreased immunization rates as this kind of office visit schedule would be both time-consuming and costly.

The current immunization schedules recommended by CDC, the AAP, and AAFP were developed using a process of scientific review and are evidence-based. Dr. Sears' schedules were developed to support parents who have concerns about vaccines, but these concerns have not been supported by any current or credible research or science.

**What should we tell parents who have questions about this schedule?** In addition to explaining the risks of deciding to leave a child unvaccinated, perhaps you could quote Dr. Robert Sears himself. Dr. Sears says "My alternative schedule isn't necessarily what I would recommend parents do." And "It certainly wouldn't be a reasonable or practical vaccine schedule for our country as a whole." Finally, he tells us: "Babies would fall behind on their shots, compliance would wane, and some could be susceptible to what should be a vaccine-preventable disease." (Located at http://wwwww.askdrsears.com/thevaccinebook/.)

## Adult Immunization Schedules Available
Adult Immunizations Schedules, (11x17, full color, on cardstock), are currently available. Please send your complete contact information, including mailing address, to Alex ThurdeKoos at althurdekoos@isdh.in.gov if you would like to receive an Adult Schedule.

## Where to Find the Return Label
Remember to save a small supply of McKesson shipping boxes for vaccine returns. The Return Label can be located on the inside flap of all shipments received from McKesson.

## Upcoming Events

**March 17, 2009**
**8:30am - 1:00pm (EST)**
**Immunizations from A to Z PLUS**
County City Building, 227 W
Jefferson Blvd, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Board
Room, South Bend, IN
For more information, contact Jodi
Morgan (317) 650-5051 or
jmorgan@isdh.in.gov
Click here for registration form.

**March 19, 2009**
**12:00pm - 3:00pm (EST)**
**IIC Meeting**
Rice Auditorium, ISDH

**March 20, 2009**
**9:30am - 11:30am**
**CHIRP User Group Meeting**
St. Vincent Clay Hospital Medical
Office Building, Community Room,
1214 East National Ave, Brazil, IN

**March 20, 2009**
**1:30pm - 3:00pm**
**Introduction to CHIRP
Training**
St. Vincent Clay Hospital, Medical
Office Building, Community Room,
1214 East National Ave, Brazil, IN

**March 27, 2009**
**8:30am - 3:00pm (EST)**
**Immunizations from A to Z PLUS**
Spring Mill State Park, Oak Room
SR 60 East, Mitchell, IN
For more information, contact
Sharon Griffin at (317) 670-8826 or
sgriffin@isdh.in.gov
Click here for registration form.

**April 8, 2009**
**8:00am - 12:00pm (EST)**
**Immunizations from A to Z**
Kathryn Weil Center for Education,
415 N 26th Street, Suite 400,
Lafayette, IN
For more information, contact Jill
King (317) 501-7461 or
jiking@isdh.in.gov
Click here for registration form.

## How Patients/Parents Can Opt-Out of CHIRP

Indiana Code 16-38-5-2 states that a provider (which as defined in the law includes School Nurses) may enter data from all patients into CHIRP, unless the patient/parent specifically states they do not want to participate. Indiana is an "opt-out" state, meaning you are not required to inform parents/patients you are entering data, but the parents/patients do have the option to request there information not be entered into the registry. (See Indiana Code 16-38-5-2 below.)

If a patient/parent requests data entered on themselves or a child be omitted or removed from the registry, they must complete the Immunization Data Removal form, and all data attached to the individual will be removed from the Registry. The form can be downloaded at https://chirp.in.gov/chirp_files/docs/CHIRP_Data_Removal.pdf. There is no form for inclusion as the Indiana Code assumes all records may be entered.

Providers wishing to inform patients/parents that their immunization records will be entered into CHIRP may display the CHIRP provider poster in their office. The poster can be downloaded at https://chirp.in.gov/chirp_files/docs/promotional/CHIRP_Provider_Poster.pdf.

To access Indiana Code 16-38-5, visit http://www.in.gov/legislative/ic/code/title16/ar38/ch5.html.

## Recommended Browser Settings for CHIRP

CHIRP works well under most browsers' default settings. If your agency enforces a more strict security policy, the instructions below should allow most users to navigate the site. Please consult your system administrator before making any changes.
1) Reset your Zones:
   (NOTE: if you are an advanced user and have customized your zones, you may want to skip this step. If you are not an advanced user, you can safely proceed.)
      a. Open your Internet Explorer browser, click on the Tools menu (or icon) and then on Internet Options
      b. Select the Security Tab
      c. Reset the default of each security level by clicking the Reset all zones to default level button  (NOTE: If the button is gray, then your zones are already at the default settings and you don't have to perform this step)
2) Add CHIRP to the Trusted Sites list:
      a. Click on the Trusted Sites web content zone (checkmark in green circle icon) and click the Sites button
      b. Type https://**chirp.IN.gov** in the *Add this Web site to the zone* field and click the Add button
3) Ensure JavaScript is enabled:
      a. Click on the Trusted Sites web content zone (checkmark in green circle icon)
      b. Click the Custom Level button
      c. Scroll down through the list to the Scripting Section of the list
      d. Enable all three options in the Scripting Section
      e. Click the OK button (twice)
4) Allow Pop-up Windows from CHIRP:
      a. Click on the Tools menu (or button)
      b. Click on Pop-up Blocker, then Pop-up Blocker Settings (If it's grayed out, click on *Turn on Pop-up Blocker* first)
      c. Type https://**chirp.IN.gov** into the *Address of Web site to Allow* field and click the Add button
      d. Select the *Medium: Block most automatic pop-ups* level in the drop down box bottom of the page